

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-07 DHA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /090 W

-----241326Z 021010 /41

P R 241222Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4466

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1754

NOFORN

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SU, SA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIAN COMMISSIONER AHTISAARI ON THE BRITISH ROLE
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: LONDON 8467

SUMMARY: NAMIBIAN COMMISSIONER AHTISAARI DESCRIBED THE NEGATIVE REACTIONS OF THE COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA TO UK AMB MURRAY'S CONTACT ON THE CAPETOWN TALKS, RELATING IT PARTLY TO MURRAY'S PERSONAL MANNER BUT MOSTLY TO THE SERIOUS LACK OF CREDI-
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BILITY HELD BY THE UK IN AFRICA. AHTISAARI HOPES THE US WILL ESTABLISH ITS OWN DIALOGUE WITH THE COUNCIL. HE EXPECTS THE US TO BE FORCED TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF THE BRITISH IN AFRICA, THOUGH. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING SOCIAL PERIOD BEFORE LUNCH IN AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S HONOR MAY 23 IN LUSAKA, UN

COMMISSIONER FOR NAMIBIA AHTISAARI TOOK DELOFF ASIDE TO REPORT HIS SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION MADE BY UK AMB JAMES MURRAY ON ZAMBIAN AMB AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA KAMANA AND SOME OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS WHEN MURRAY MET WITH THEM IN MAPUTO MAY 19 (OR MAY 20). THE MEETING WAS HELD ON THE REQUEST OF MURRAY, WHO WAS PURSUING THE AGREEMENT OF THE FIVE, REACHED IN NEW YORK THE WEEK OF MAY 9, THAT A BRIEFING FOR THE COUNCIL ON THE RESULTS OF THE CAPETOWN TALKS ON NAMIBIA SHOULD BE ARRANGED IN NEW YORK.

2. AHTISAARI SAID MURRAY IRRITATED THE COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH HIS MANNER AND SPECIFICALLY ANGERED KAMANA, WHOM HE REPEATEDLY INTERRUPTED AND CORRECTED IN THE PROCESS OF THE DISCUSSION. AHTISAARI SAID IT IS ONLY FAIR TO OBSERVE THAT THE COUNCIL MEMBERS' IRRITATION STEMMED IN LARGE PART FROM THE CONFUSION AND DELAY IN ARRANGING A MEETING BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND THE FIVE. NONETHELESS, MURRAY HIMSELF STRUCK THEM WITH A STYLE THAT EVOKED STRONGLY NEGATIVE REACTIONS AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL BRITISH IMAGE, OF WHICH MURRAY WITH MONACLE SEEMED A PERFECT EXAMPLE.

3. AHTISAARI ADVISED THAT A WAY MUST BE FOUND FOR THE US TO ESTABLISH A CONTINUING CONTACT WITH THE COUNCIL WHICH WOULD BE
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INDEPENDENT OF THE COLLEGIAL APPROACHES OF THE FIVE, EVEN THOUGH IN SO DOING THE US WOULD STILL BE RECOGNIZED AS REPRESENTING THE WESTERN GROUP. HE ALLUDED AGAIN TO HIS SUGGESTION SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT THE US AND PERHAPS OTHER WESTERNERS FIND A WAY TO "JOIN" THE COUNCIL. IN THE MEANTIME, HE URGED USUN TO WORK AT A CLOSER, MORE CONSCIOUSLY STRUCTURED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COUNCIL, TO STAY CLOSE TO THE EVOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL'S (AND THE UN'S) ROLE IN THE NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT. HE SAID HE INTENDED TO URGE THAT SYG WALDHEIM PAY SOME ATTENTION TO THE COUNCIL, SOMEWHAT IN THE SAME SPIRIT.

4. AHTISAARI SAID THE US PERFORMANCE IN MAPUTO WAS VERY HELPFUL IN CLOSING THE "HUGE" CREDIBILITY GAP THAT EXISTS BETWEEN THE WEST AND AFRICA. WHILE MOST OF HIS AFRICAN CONTACTS ARE NOW WILLING TO ACCEPT US SERIOUSNESS, THEY

ARE TOTALLY UNWILLING TO BELIEVE THE BRITISH.

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NOFORN

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

THE OTHER WESTERNERS MAKE LITTLE DIFFERENCE.
EVERYONE, HE SAID, KNOWS THE US HAULED THE
BRITISH TO MAPUTO "KICKING AND SCREAMING";
VIRTUALLY EVERYONE HAS MADE THE STORY OF THE
BRITISH DEL'S LAST-MINUTE DIFFICULTIES IN
ACCEPTING THE COMMON RESPONSE OF THE FIVE A PART
OF THE LORE OF MAPUTO.

5. AHTISAARI SAID HE PERSONALLY FEELS THAT THE
EFFORTS OF THE AMERICANS TO CARRY THE BRITISH
FORWARD IS ADMIRABLE AND SKILLFULLY DONE, BUT IT
PROBABLY IS UNNECESSARY IN TERMS OF MOVING

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AFRICAN SOLUTIONS. THE US IS THE ONLY POWER THE AFRICANS WATCH AND NEED TO BELIEVE. AHTISAARI HIMSELF IS CONVINCED THAT AT SOME POINT THE US IS GOING TO HAVE TO BREAK FREE OF THE RESTRAINTS OF THE BRITISH RELATIONSHIP IN AFRICA. THE BREAK, HE ARGUES, IS INEVITABLE, GIVEN THE DIRECTION AND PACE OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. WHEN IT HAPPENS, HE CONTENTED, AFRICANS WILL BE RELIEVED AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T ALTER THE DETERMINATION OF THE US.

COMMENT: AHTISAARI AS NAMIBIAN COMMISSIONER WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE AFRICANS HAS A SPECIAL VIEW OF THE COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA AND OF THE BRITISH. OUR OWN OPINION IS THAT MURRAY, A SKILLED DIPLOMAT, DID VERY WELL AT MAPUTO IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION CAUSED BY THE LAST MINUTE INTERVENTION OF HIS MINISTER. THEREAFTER HE FELT HE HAD VIRTUALLY NO ROOM FOR MANEUVER. NEVERTHELESS, THE MESSAGE AHTISAARI CONVEYED OF AFRICAN LACK OF FAITH IN THE BRITISH IS ONE WE ARE PICKING UP FROM VARIOUS SOURCES. IT IS ONE THE BRITISH IN PRIVATE CONCEDE AS TED ROWLANDS DID WHEN HE INFORMED AMBASSADOR YOUNG THAT IN NYERERE'S SHOES HE HIMSELF WOULD DISTRUST THE BRITISH GIVEN THE RECENT RECORD. IN DEVELOPING OUR AFRICAN INITIATIVES, WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE THIS COMPLICATION INTO ACCOUNT.
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